

VZCZCXRO1266

OO RUEHAG RUEHBZ RUEHDF RUEH DU RUEHIK RUEHJO RUEHLZ RUEHMR RUEHRN
RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHFR #1183/01 1751657
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 231657Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3517
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES PRIORITY
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE PRIORITY 0458
RUEHOU/AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY 1094
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 0204
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 0245
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 0272

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 001183

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [UNSC](#) [FR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: FRANCE ACCEPTS IN PRINCIPLE SEEKING A PRST ON
ZIMBABWE; SARKOZY, KOUCHNER BLAST MUGABE

REF: STATE 66915

11. (SBU) We passed reftel points to the French MFA early on June 23, including to the AF and IO/UNP equivalents. DCM subsequently raised the subject with French MFA Political Affairs Director (P-equivalent) Gerard Araud. He stated general French agreement with our points and general assessment of the dire situation in Zimbabwe. With respect to the UK draft of a PRST under discussion at the UNSC, Araud unhesitatingly affirmed French support in principle for such a move but indicated the GOF would want to consider the text before deciding what it would do. As regards French public statements about the situation, he encouraged us to check the Internet for FM Kouchner's public statements on the subject, which are summarized below, but not yet available on the French MFA website at www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en.

12. (U) Both French President Sarkozy and FM Kouchner, together in Israel for a state visit, blasted the government of Zimbabwe for its treatment of that country's political opposition. Sarkozy, in a statement issued June 22 by the French presidency, accused the GOZ of having "deliberately chosen the path of violence" to "gag" its people and prevent Zimbabweans from expressing themselves at the ballot box. He further condemned the "campaign of violent acts and serious atrocities perpetrated by the regime of President Mugabe against Mr. Tsvangirai, opposition supporters, and the Zimbabwean people." Sarkozy said these acts constitute a "flagrant violation" of democracy and the rules set forth under the AU and SADC charters. "France will never accept any formulation that does not strictly conform to the will of Zimbabwe's people (,who are) not able to express themselves by the ballot box and in the framework of a free, just, open, and transparent vote," the communique continued. "What will take place Friday will not be responsive to this expectation."

13. (U) In an interview June 22, Kouchner, was typically much more blunt in his characterization of the situation in Zimbabwe and of President Mugabe: "Whoever believes he is ordained by God and that God should keep him in his position is nothing but a swindler and an assassin, and that must be said with force. (Tsvangirai) threw in the towel because someone murdered a certain number of his supporters and above all officials of his party. It is, therefore, not a question for France to accept this false election, that would finish up with one sole candidate. ...It is truly the greatest denial of democracy that Africa has ever know.

14. (U) The French MFA, on June 23, issued a more measured statement through its spokesperson, who was asked at the daily press briefing whether Mugabe had lost his legitimacy

following the decision by Tsvangirai to withdraw from the presidential election. Following is the Embassy's informal translation of the text of the statement:

Begin text:

France respects the decision of Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai not to stand for election in the second round of the Zimbabwean presidential election. We hold the Zimbabwean authorities responsible for this withdrawal, due to a climate of deliberate violence, and deplore, as the Slovene presidency of the European Union did yesterday, the grave atrocities perpetrated by the regime of President Mugabe against Mr. Tsvangirai and his supporters.

In the absence of Mr. Tsvangirai, the vote scheduled for June 27 does not meet the expectations of the international community for a free, just, open, and transparent election.

As the Slovene presidency of the European Union Council said, we wish to work together with the AU and SADC.

Concerning France, the President of the Republic indicated that we must be ready to "take, with our EU partners, all measures necessary against those responsible for what has become an electoral masquerade.

End text.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:France>

PARIS 00001183 002 OF 002

STAPLETON